

CIRCLE NEWS

UNITY * COMMUNICATION * SUPPORT

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A Circle Newsletter

November 1982

THE CIRCLE NEWS

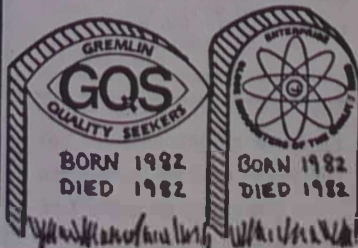
Well this is it. Our first issue of this monthly rag. So I thought I'd take just a moment to let you know what we're all about.

The Circle News is a monthly newsletter devoted to communication. We'll tell you what's going on in the various Quality Circles, what's been going on at the video game shows, how Sega games are doing in the arcades, and in general, we will try to keep you informed about what's going on around you at work. We are also going to have a "Want Ad" section so you can buy, sell, swap or give away what ever you want to.

The best thing is it's your paper; for you, about you, and from you. Yes "from you," because if we don't hear from you, we won't have anything to print and who wants a blank news-

letter. So "help," we need all the news we can get. If you're a writer, a cartoonist, or a news hound, we need you to support us in supporting you.

G.T. BARKLEY



DON'T LET THEM DIE!

THE RATINGS CORNER

According to the Replay Magazine article, "The Players' Choice," we have four

games in the top twenty for October 1982. Turbo, which is rated fourteenth, has a good game rating by 76% of the operators polled. Zaxxon, in sixteenth place, has a good game rating by 94% of the operators polled.

Monaco GP, one of our older driving games, is in seventeenth place with a good game rating by 52% of the operators. Frogger maintains two positions in Replay standings. The upright standing is nineteenth and rated between good and decent by 94% of the operators. The cocktail version is rated differently than the upright. However, it is ranked fourth in the cocktail videos. Subroc 3-D is one of our newer games and is rated as excellent in Replay's Best New Uprights section. Hopefully next month we will have some information on our new Pango game. Till next month.

FROGGY PHIL

CIRCLE GROUPS WORK!

What is a computer terminal doing at the end of the Burn-In line? It's the result of a circle group presentation to management. It shows that circle groups do get things accomplished.

The Problem: How do you get the right part to a customer for his game, if there was more than one type of that particular part used in production? This is a \$35,000 a year problem in shipping wrong parts, returning them and shipping another again.

For Example: A distributor orders a coin door for Frogger, and found there were six different coin doors used. We have a one in six chance of shipping the right part. If the distributor has the game serial number, the odds can be reduced--but still with no certainty of sending the right part.

The Solution: Customer Service Circle Group researched the problem. The solution we came up with was to be able to get these needed part numbers accessible, by keying in the game

serial number on the C.S. parts computer terminal. Management liked the idea so much, they placed a terminal at the end of the Burn-In line. As each game rolls by, an operator enters the serial number and the part numbers of five major assemblies, comprising the bulk of the problem areas. With this information, parts clerks can check by serial number the exact assemblies used in that particular game.

In Summary: Fellow employees, if you don't have a circle group for your Dept., please contact Vera DeMichele and see what you can do about getting one started. Circle groups are good for everyone who wants to make their job better.

R.G. LARKIN

LA COSTA RESORT

I'm going to open here with a quote from our Chairman, Mr. Dave Rosen. "Our meeting comes after a summer we'd like to forget" We all know that the video game market over the summer went stale and we had layoffs because of it. Mr.

Rosen went on to say that this slow down of new game sales was caused by three things. 1.) An oversaturation of equipment in the field; 2.) A low trade-in value for used videos; and 3.) Illegal game copies which were put on the market at a lot cheaper price. He then came out with three solutions to these problems. First by introducing Pengo, Subroc and Tac/scan; Second by stating we are going to broaden our consumer advertising campaign; and third by reinforcing the convert-a-game concept. He didn't say, but in case you don't know, Sega has shut down quite a number of companies throughout the world for copying our games.

So what do we see as a result of this show? Most obvious is, after dropping to 380 employees in the summer, we now have 573 employed here in San Diego. Some of this is due to the three excellent games we introduced, but without hosting the La Costa Show, I don't think we'd have done as well with them. I've heard some of you and I'm guilty of it too, call Tac/Scan, Trash Can. But in

recent market research survey I took part in at the arcades, it's doing extremely well.

Are you ready for this? On the 18th of Nov. we're introducing four more games and two other product lines at the A.M.O.A. Show in Chicago. Read the next article to find out more about them.

One last point I'm going to make, out of all the Distributors (which was all our U.S. Dist. along with nine foreign countries) I only overheard one person making derogatory remarks about Sega and the La Costa Show. How's that for a percentage with over 200 people present.

R.G. LARKIN

THE A.M.O.A. SHOW

At the La Costa distributor meeting, it was brought up how many times we have been the innovator of the video industry. We were the first to introduce multi-level games, first with color and audio effects, first with convert-game and color X/Y. And with the introduction of Subroc-3D, we're the first

to enter the third dimension. At the upcoming A.M.O.A. Show we're going to introduce another first, laser-disc technology in video games.

The game: "Astron Belt." The player will have a spaceship that is superimposed on the actual scenes from movies such as "Star Wars" and "Star Trek." I've not seen the game yet, but the concept is great and I think it's going to be a real winner.

The other new games being introduced are: Buck Rogers (which I know nothing about), Super-Zaxxon and Monster Bash.

Last but by no means least, we are going to introduce two more product lines. The first being specialized cabinets in the shape of a monster, a monkey and a robot. These will be for customers that want a particular game to stand out in their crowded arcades. The other unit will be a remote controlled robot which can walk around, shake hands and carry on conversations with people at the control of an operator. Sounds like this show is going to be more successful than La

Coste.

R.G. LARKIN

"CUSTOMER SERVICE, MAY I HELP YOU?"

The technical service telephone lines in Customer Service are open from 7 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Monday thru Friday, and are located in a room off of the Customer Service Lab (and one in the monitor repair lab).

We have two toll free numbers. One is nationwide that we get calls on from all over the United States, the other is a state of California number, for toll free calling within the state. We also have a regular toll number which we receive calls from customers in San Diego and from other countries.

People call all these lines for troubleshooting assistance, information about games and schematic inquiries. The calls received are from people who have none or minimum experience working on the games, to very experienced technicians. Where ever the call is from and who ever is calling, we strive to give the most informative advice in the most pleasant manner.

If the Customers' game requires more than troubleshooting assistance over the phone, they can send the failing part to us for more precise repair.

On the average of 25 weeks compared, Customer Service receives 145 calls per week. The most called about games have been Frogger and Zaxxon.

Some calls are handled in just a few minutes, others require more in depth discussion with the Customer attempting to repair their own game. In both circumstances, satisfaction is our goal with the Customer on the telephone and in the field, sending their games in for repair.

R. PAGE

ONCE AND FUTURE THEMES

The time has come when it might be good to lean back and take a good sober look at times past and times to come. And just what does this mean? Take a good look at the video industry: It's history, it's application, it's promises for the future. How has it affected us? How will it affect us?

Video games did not spring full grown from the

brow of Zeus. Infact their appearance in the early seventies positioned innocently in dusty cluttered corners, nestled between myriads of antiquated pinball relics or occassionally accompanied by a derelict jukebox gave no indication as to the infinitesimal takeover soon to be witnessed. The video game era came into being quietly, timidly, but was soon to give new life and direction to a popular past time.

To be fair, due credit must be given to Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and designer of the first video game. It was his contribution that inspired a new trend in the future. And soon new names were to be found in local arcades; Gremlin, Midway, Ramtek, Atari and Exidy were enjoying the same fame and popularity as their more prestigious pinball manufacturing contemporaries: Chicago Coin, Williams, Bally, and Gottlieb. And it did not stop there.

Throughout the 70's, new innovations in technology and construction led way to new concepts in programs and designs. The black and

white video game prototypes were evolving into something no one at that time had the foresight to see. And the results quickly overwhelmed us.

Today, the direct descendants of these early inspirations are hardly recognizable for what they truly are. Cockpits and table versions now replace the once larger and less attractive pinballs while still finding their ways into those less attractive corners and throughfares, only now not so much as space fillers, but as attractive eye catchers which balance and create the artistic beauty which is present in some of the better arcades.

A fad quickly passing? With opposition to video games by a concerned public and the mistaken notion that video technology has gone as far as it can go--one might think so. But such is not the case.

Opposition groups opposed to video game "hang outs," have not recognized the fact that the majority of school-age kids are going to hang out some place anyway. Whether they hang out at video arcades or in the

is a matter of design, not how many quarters they have. Most reasonable people realize this and this will carry over in the future. The ones that don't, are the members of the society that always manage to find something bad out of everything that's good.

And video technology itself has only begun to touch and affect our lives. Variations on video game designs can already be found in home computers and tactical simulations for the military. This is just the beginning of something very wonderful.

New directions in technology include fiber optic networks, flat screen monitors, 3-D Imagery and soft halography. A game of the future may well feature an answering computer voice complete with Dolby stereo sound effects, situated within a cineramic cockpit with halographic imagery. Gyro-optic effects would give a real sense of motion, acceleration and even G force.

Are we there yet? No, not quite--but that's what the future is all about--getting there. So perhaps

now it is time to look at times past and times to come with a new and positive perspective. The future is after all, a continuation of the past and what we make of it. Go get 'em Buck Rogers!

CeHANNAN

NAME CHANGE

In case you haven't heard, Sega/gremlin Industries, Inc., has officially changed its name. Now, Sega Japan will be known as Sega Enterprises Ltd., and Gremlin Industries is known as Sega Electronics. This affects anyone who deals with the customers, but doesn't affect the fact that we will still be servicing Gremlin games. We service all games of both Industries for a five year period from their production date.

R.G. LARKIN

THANKS FOR LISTENING

We of the Customer Service Circle group hope that you have gotten some useful information and/or enjoyable reading out of this first issue of the Circle News. We want to get your interest

and hope to spark the fire, so to speak, under anyone who'd like to put their thoughts down on paper in one of the future issues. Your thoughts can be in the form of articles, statistics or maybe an ad for the Classified Section. Being a Circle member is not a requirement, but we'd like to see more Circle groups getting started. Any inquiries about the Circle News can be made by contacting Vera DeMichele at 4361 or Customer Service at 4456. Thanks for listening!

R.G. LARKIN

APPRECIATION

Customer Service Circle wishes to express our appreciation, for all the help we received in getting this first issue of the Circle News to the press. In particular, our thanks go to Richard Cortez, Technical Publications Editor; and Carol Johnson from our Art Department.



...in all the FUN!

Sea World

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE: King size water bed frame with air mattress \$200.00 Call 582-9576 or contact Brian in C.S. stock

1978 Cadillac Fleetwood Brougham De Elegante 88,000 Miles, Burgundy with Velour interior, everything power, Deluxe spoked wheel covers, New steel-belted radials with 55,000 mile warranty, EXCELLENT CONDITION!! Low wholesale Bluebook \$5960.00 Asking only \$4500.00. Bill Sowell: 477-2907 (leave message)

4 SALE: Bultaco 125 C.C. Pursang, 5 speed gearbox, for off-road use only. A real fun desert machine. Has 25 Horsepower and runs great! No reasonable offer will be refused! Call Bob at: 445-3934 after 4 P.M.

1979 Honda CB-650, 3,500 Miles, Windshield and Rack Very Clean! \$1,350.00. Call 484-1016

Wurlitzer Concert Console Organ model #4573. Three

manuals (keyboards) with full 25 key base, 103 controls, Orbit III Synthesizer, built in cassette deck Low dealer book is: \$2990. Asking \$1500.00 or Best Offer. Call Bill Sowell at 477-2907 and leave message.

Anyone wishing to place an advertisement in a future issue of the Circle News Classifieds, contact Melody Black at extension 4345 or in the Customer Service Stockroom. Deadline will be five working days before the first of each month. If there's any problem getting through on ext. 4345, you can use 277-8700 ext. 232.

RECORD THOSE SPECIAL EVENTS! A videotaped record of that special event is a priceless treasure! Weddings, school plays, dance recitals, home inventories, etc. Professional equipment--Reasonable prices. Call Jeff at 280-4378 in the evenings.

Upright freezer for sale. Not sure on the exact dimensions, but any interested party can call Vera DeMichele at 484-1765. Asking \$100.00.

FOR SALE: Holley four barrel carburator, 650 C.F.M. Rebuilt. Call 485-5145 between four and eight P.M.

WANTED: The Circle News Staff would like to run a column of employees' "New Year's Resolutions," in the December Issue. Please keep them clean if you want them published in the Circle News. Send all prospective 'resolutions' to Bob Larkin in the Customer Service Department by way of an Inter-office memo.

WANTED TO BUY: Parrot, hand tame preferred. Call 485-5145 between four and eight P.M.